



**THE STRATEGY OF THE  
DEVOTIONAL LIFE**



# The Strategy of the Devotional Life

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*To the Members of the Council of Cities of the  
Methodist Episcopal Church who gave a most  
generous hearing to the addresses herewith  
published when they were delivered at the an-  
nual meeting of the Council in Chicago in 1922.*



## Preface

**A** LITTLE while ago the author of the studies which make up this volume was asked to give a series of devotional addresses to a group of city workers gathered in Chicago from all parts of the United States. He found the task of preparing these addresses particularly stimulating as well as demanding. The study of the strategy of the devotional life from the standpoint of the experience of the city worker had allurements as well as pitfalls of its own. It was clear at once that the manifold life of the throbbing metropolis must itself be made a part of the devotional experience and indeed must be interpreted by it. So the chapters on "The Two Cities," "The Individual and the City of God," and "The Romance of the City" were written. But the worker in the great and vital city feeling all the movement of its own intense and critical thinking must face the necessity



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of basing his devotional life upon a deep meeting of mind and heart. He must see the relation of "The Courage of the Mind" to the life of the spirit if he is to command the respect of keen young men in the great town. He must discover just what convictions upbuild that inner life which he would make a part of the life of the city. He must learn what are the "Creative Beliefs." Then his warm and rich experience must be understood in relation to the long past which lies behind. He will have a new capacity to make his own experience a gift to be shared as well as a privilege to be maintained when he has apprehended the nature of the "Historical Continuity" of his faith and his life.

By this time deeper questions emerge. The most testing and terrible problems of the city have to do with questions which effect the conscience. How can a man be prepared to face and meet these questions triumphantly. How can the devotional life of the city worker equip him for moral leadership. The inevitable answer is that the de-

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votional life itself must become a fellowship with the "Conscience of God." One last pressing question remains. Life all about the man in the great modern town is inorganic. It is so in the city, in the manifold institutions men have built, and in the individual life. The profound experience of the tragedy of all this inorganic activity and the personal appropriation of Christianity as a power to make life organic will touch the very deepest possibilities of the devotional life as an inner experience and as an inspiration to creative and brotherly activity. So the man in the throbbing metropolis reaches his great hour as he comes to experience the "Organic Life." Now he becomes not only a worker but an inspirer "living in the City of Man for the City of God."

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## I

### THE TWO CITIES

**H**ISTORY is a tale of many cities. It is also a tale of many countrysides.

But it is essentially a tale of massive and masterful towns. When you have told the story of Babylon and Nineveh and Susa and Jerusalem and Tyre and Athens and Rome and Alexandria and Venice and Florence and Genoa and London and Paris and Lisbon and Antwerp and Amsterdam and Vienna and Moscow and New York and Boston and Berlin you have fairly well told the tale of the life of the world. The man who lives in one of the world's great cities is all the while feeling the very pulse of life.

The man who is serving a modern town in the name of the great Master comes to a supreme task with the need of supreme inspirations and constant reinforcements. The peril of waning enthusiasm, of the loss

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of passionate optimism, of the coming of corroding cynicism is always before him. He must discover the secret of fountains of vitality playing within if he is to do continued and effective work for the city without. His devotional life must furnish perpetual energy for his life of service.

A man's devotional life is lived in those hours when he shares his whole passing experience with the Master of his life. His prayer has a range equal to his thoughts and his worship has an area equal to that of his life. When a man's life is full of things never mentioned in his prayers a good portion of the territory of his personality has not yet come within the range of the divine influence. When his prayers are full of things never expressed in action there is the beginning of unreality and dishonesty in the devotional life. The picture of a man's life of prayer should be the actual portrait of his whole personality in all the ranges of the adventure of living.

The Christian in the city can never pray long without remembering his town. The

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tides of its life pass through his petitions. And all his experience of its manifold meanings becomes part of his devotional life. If we attempt to follow the fashion in which the life of the city passes through the prayer of a Christian worker we will come upon several very important aspects of the experience.

In the first place there is a deep and poignant fear of the city which once felt is never forgotten. Moving through all its streets, hidden back of its multitudinous doors, fluttering beneath the bright lights of its white ways at night, there are physical and moral and spiritual tragedies which pierce the heart. Many people learn to take them for granted. It is precisely the characteristic of a Christian that he cannot take them for granted. And the more he is conscious of the influence of the Master and Brother of all men, the less he can take them for granted. A Christian experience keeps a man's sensibilities keen and responsive. When the hour of easy and complacent acceptance of things as they are has come to



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a man's life the time of his power to do the best sort of Christian service has passed. Only men who keep alive the fear of the city, the sort of fear which only brave men and women can feel, only such can be trusted with the critical matters of leadership in our great towns.

Then there is the love of the city. What Jerusalem was to Isaiah, what Florence was to Dante, what Boston was to Phillips Brooks in their own measure and in their own way each city will become to the men who keep them forever upon their minds and in their hearts and all the while attempt to see them with the eyes of Christ. The whole surging bewildered wonderful procession of men and women and little children in one of our cities comes to hold its own place in the heart of the worker. Deeper and deeper as the years go on becomes the love of the town. And as its streets are bathed in his prayers and the tale of his longing for its good is poured out in passionate petition, the love of the town becomes a profounder reality.

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There is a wonderful thing which a man learns about a city. He learns that it has an exhaustless capacity to surprise him. He learns to expect the unexpected. He learns to find love where you would suppose it had been stamped out. He learns to find the fair flowers of all the virtues blooming in most unexpected places. He learns to find wistful outreach after goodness and God where you would suppose these things had been forever effaced. And as in prayer he remembers all these experiences he is given a child's heart in the midst of the cool and disciplined experience of a man. When you no longer expect to be surprised you are worthless. When wonder has died from a man's heart and expectation has faded from his eyes the very genius of his task has gone from him. But this is just the thing which does not happen to the leader who keeps the city in his heart while he prays. He has no illusions about its vices. He has no illusions about its corruptions. He has no illusions about its sins. But he knows also its hunger for God. He knows also its capacity for

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God. He knows that exhaustless quality of personality which causes it to be true that just when you think that you are defeated and all the doors are closed the amazing thing happens and the happy hour of victory arrives.

But it is not merely the city where he dwells which is in the heart of the Christian worker. He has seen a vision of another city. He has seen it come down out of heaven. It is not the city of man though it is a city of men. It is the city of God. It is the city his city may become. As Isaiah dreamed of the day when Jerusalem would be a righteous town so he dreams of his city actually becoming the city of his Master Christ. The consciousness of an eternal reality is like a foundation of rock. As Plato saw the ideal state more real than the wonderful Athens he knew, so the modern Christian sees the triumphant city of God as a reality more dominant than the vivid marvelous town where he dwells. All the things which do not belong to the city of God will go down at last. That city is

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eternal. It is in the hour of deep moral and spiritual struggle that this vision becomes most potent and most possessing. But the man who goes out to the city of men fresh from this vision of the city of God can serve it and love it and bring the high realities within its reach as he never could do before.

So our Christian leader is a believer in two cities. One is the city as it is today. The other is the city as it may become by the grace of God. His vision of the Holy City makes perpetual music under all the sadness and the tragedy of the town where he dwells. He has faith that the town where he lives has the capacity to become the city of God. Like Columbus when he crossed the unknown sea, like Magellan when he circumnavigated the globe, like the great pioneer men of all the years he believes in an ideal which shines with perpetual radiance in his own soul.

## II

### THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE CITY OF GOD

**S**OMEBODY has to have an eye if the vision of the city of God is to be seen.

With all our talk of the State, and Humanity, and Public Opinion there is no such thing as an eye in general or an ear in general or a brain in general. If thoughts are to be thought somebody must think them. You have to have an individual mind to think socially. You have to have an individual heart to feel socially. You have to have an individual will to decide socially. "I John" must see the vision of the city coming down out of heaven.

A great many people have come to have an entirely new conception of some aspects of the life of New York at a certain period because they have read the amazingly effective stories of O. Henry. Here

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was a man who saw pretty much everything. He saw the things which were visible. And he saw a good many things which were invisible. He could meet people on the street and look right into their hearts. And so he painted his wonderful literary water colors of the great town. There is the raw material of a wonderful social passion in the writings of O. Henry. The town was there before. Its romance and tragedy were there before. But O. Henry brought the seeing eye and the understanding heart. One responsive personality interpreted the life of the city. Years before the same thing had been done for London by Charles Dickens. He gave England new eyes to see its metropolis. He gave England a new conscience to face the problems of its life. He gave England a new heart to feel its human interest, and the poignant pathos of its suffering and the hidden beauty of its common life. It required an individual to make the city articulate.

'The City of God is hovering over every great town. But it requires a prophet to

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see it. It requires an individual mind to begin to think its great thoughts. It requires an individual heart to begin to respond to its great motives. The City of God must capture the city of man life by life and heart by heart. Great organization of noble ideals will come at last. Powerful codification of high principles must be achieved. But the basis of all this is first an individual man who sees the vision and dreams the dream. Then as he shares his purpose and his passion there are other individuals whose eyes glow with the same ideal. And finally there are enough human centers of a new social passion to renew the life of the town. In this sense there is nothing more individual than the movement for social renewal.

The city worker then has before him as a perpetual task the socializing of the minds of the men and women and children, especially the children, who are all about him. They must be brought to see the vision of the city of God come down out of heaven. They must be led to believe that the city of

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man can become the city of God. And if this is to be done the city worker must himself move about with an undimmed consciousness of the glory of that city whose messenger and prophet he is. There are many details of organization which require his attention. There is an endless amount of practical coöperative activity and of stern battling against entrenched evil and for the unattained good. But back of all this the one supreme gift of the worker to the city where he dwells will be his own undying faith, his own unabated confidence in the city of God.

All this is seen to be critically important when we remember that the city worker is just the man who will find it easy to get lost in details. He is just the man who will find it easy to lose his vision in the midst of hard and sordid actualities. He will find it easy to lose his passion in the midst of the disillusioning years. For he is no protected closet philosopher. He is in daily contact with things as they are. And sometimes when he is weary and disheartened he would



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find it very easy to pray the prayer of the horror stricken character in the memorable poem who unable to bear the knowledge of the awful realities of the world cried out: "Oh, Goddess make me blind again." The city worker sees sordidness in the daily practice of its ways of guile. He sees every noble word prostituted to an evil purpose. He sees every lovely ideal soiled upon the lips of men who give a verbal allegiance at the very moment when these ideals are being trampled underfoot. He knows what it is to see treachery undisguised, to watch the unmasked workings of ingratitude, to see the power of evil beating down the good upon every street of the city's life. And it is this man under this terrible strain who is to be a power house of idealism, who is to be a source of permanent enthusiasm about the city of God.

Of course the amazing thing is just that so many city workers do it. They confront this supreme demand and they do not fail. Others who know a hundredth as much as they of the slimy evil which serpent like

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crawls through human life become scornful misanthropists. And these apostles of the city of God know the worst and still believe in the best. There is no heroism more notable than this.

And such heroism must have sources deep in the life of the soul. It must rise a perennial fountain from a life lived in contact with the God who is the hope of the city and the hope of the world. The living God is the only hope of the dying city. And that contact with the eternal mind and heart and will which renews human hope is a matter of the supreme strategy. It is here that we see the fashion in which the devotional life of the city worker perpetually renews his vision and sends him back fresh and keen and eager to his tasks. He must have a mountain where he sees things which cause his face to shine. And that is the mountain of his life alone with the great Master of life who is perpetually unwearied and who pursues his patient powerful way for the renewal of the life of man.

George Matheson was perhaps the great-

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est preacher in Scotland of his time. He fought with terrible handicaps. He knew all the lonely tragedy of blindness. And yet it came at last to be felt that God made him blind in order that he might see. His physical liabilities were turned into spiritual assets. And as he stood in the midst of that great city, the Athens of the North, he brought the vision of things eternal to all who heard him. Sometimes it seemed as if all the other people were blind and he alone had power to see. He was never more graphic than in that sort of speaking and writing which appealed to the eye. At the very point where he was weakest he seemed to have become most strong. God had given him eyes in the midst of the darkness of the world.

The city worker may be blinded by the sordidness all about him. Or he may come by God's great help to the place where his hope is all the surer, his confidence all the more steady, the light of his faith the more effulgent because he speaks from the midst of areas of moral darkness. He finds his

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task when he opens his door. He finds his power to maintain a permanent passion in the time of devotion when he is enabled in some little measure to see with the eyes and feel with the heart and think with the mind of the great Master of life. So he becomes a center of undying social enthusiasm. So he keeps alive among men the vision of the city of God. So he finds energy for those endless conflicts which are the daily experience of those who do battle with evil in a modern town. So even the wheels of intricate organization come at last to move to the music of that city whose builder and maker is God.

### III

#### 'THE ROMANCE OF THE CITY OF GOD

THE last public utterance of that knightly gentleman of the Free Churches, Charles Silvester Horne, was entitled: "The Romance of Preaching." There was a certain fine daring in the use of this word Romance. Hard headed and skillful men busy with the tasks of organization and the activities of manufacturing and trade have always felt a rather disdainful superiority in the presence of this word and at least since the time of Cervantes even its friends have felt a touch of apology in the midst of their devotion. The romantic man we have a way of thinking is a visionary. You need to watch him carefully if there is some really important piece of work to be done and if you are wise when you trust him you will not trust him too much. Yet it re-

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mains true that the man of vivid imagination, the man of glowing and poetic mind, the man filled with a sense of the romance of life does succeed in getting things done which would never be done without him. Even in industry a flash of the divine fire of imagination makes the difference between the shrewdly successful man and the powerful captain of men whose name becomes a household word in all the world. The man who would do well by a modern city must not only see it as a city of God in the making. He must also see it as a center of constant and marvelous romance. As he prays about it and fills his hours of devotion with the thought of it he must be ever conscious of its shimmering and glowing charm.

Now this is exactly the character of the sense of the city which came to the author of the great words in the twenty-first chapter of the Book of Revelation. When we stop to think in a fresh and unhampered way of his words we are quite astonished by them. He chooses the very most romantic

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figure in all the thought and feeling of mankind. He likens the city to a bride. He sees the city coming down as a bride adorned for her husband. His thought of the city to use a modern figure suggests wedding bells. Just as a great romance ends with the happy wedding hour so his vision of the city of God is the vision of a great marriage ceremony. The very essence of the happy romance of the world is suggested in this most extraordinary figure.

Now it must be confessed that a good many deep seeing and feeling and thinking people have not thought of a wedding when they have thought of the modern city. They have not thought of the preparation for a wedding. They have thought of a funeral. They have thought of decay and death. They have thought of disintegration and destruction. The horrible things in one of our modern towns have eclipsed all thought of beauty. When the moon was shining at night they have never forgotten the corpse which was lying in the house. Modern realism in literature is full of this sort of

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writing, full of a deadly and terrible honesty, and unlightened by hope. It paints the modern town with crape always hanging on the door.

The interesting thing about the flash of high romance in the vision of John lies just in the fact that he is as honest as any modern realist. Nowhere has the contention between good and evil been depicted with more dramatic force. Nowhere has the evil of life been described with a more awful honesty. His is not the easy optimism of one who has never seen evil. He has looked steadily into the eyes of the bad of life. He knows the whole story of its massive and sordid power. He knows the destructive passion which always lies back of the breath of the beast. And he has no illusions. He has no subterfuges. He uses words dark with horror and he paints pictures wet with the blood of conflict and lurid with the flames of evil burning its way through the world. No modern realist has written with more bitter and biting honesty of the dark facts of life. Sometimes his very symbols



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become almost too terrible for our contemplation.

Yet this very man has his sunlit vision of the city of God coming down out of heaven to be in this world. Against this very background he paints his picture of exquisite romance. It is in the midst of all this that the bride suddenly appears and the wedding bells begin to sound. After the most complete and remorseless honesty in dealing with the bad facts of life he unfolds before our eyes the shining beauty of this great hope.

We see at once that there is all the difference in the world between the romantic feeling of the man who has never faced the dark facts of life and the high romance of the man who has won his way to hope through the most bitter conflict with all the dark and sordid aspects of life. In the one case you have the optimism of ignorance. In the other you have the optimism won in battle, the finest fruit of moral and spiritual victory. It is only the man who has seen a vision of the city of death who can have the last authentic vision of the city in shining

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array the bride coming with eyes of hope and purity and mystery to the golden hour of gladness.

In a way you have one of the great tests of Christianity here. It is not always hard to hope if you live a life which never faces the darker problems. It is not impossible to be honest if you walk the dark way of disillusionment and misanthropy. But the world waits for the voice which is both honest and hopeful. 'The world waits for the leader who has seen the worst and still believes in the best.

Nowhere is this leader more potent than in the maelstrom of our modern city. He lives in its turbulent life. Its proud fierce waves beat upon him. He knows its best. He knows its worst. He also knows its God. And in great hours alone with the Master of life whose face he sees in the face of Jesus Christ he has won his passionate hopefulness. The romance of the city has been given back to him after all his disillusioning years.

The man who comes fresh to the tasks of

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the day with this shining gladness brings something to the city which is more wonderful than all his plans and is more far reaching at last than all his programs. These are useful and necessary. But the renewal of spirit has the secret in it which the men and women of the city most need. To restore the light of noble romance to men's eyes as they go about the labors of a big modern town is to render them inestimable service. To teach men to develop in relentless honesty even as they grow in dauntless enthusiasm is to interpret Christianity to them in the very terms of their struggle and their need.

To be sure there is always a great element of the heroic in this attitude. Anybody can doubt the city of God. Anybody can refuse to believe in the shining bride. Only those who have been alone with the Master who kept his faith in Gethsemane and wrested a coronation from a cross can maintain that honest and gallant hopefulness which renews the life of a city and is to renew the life of the world.

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No city worker needs to be caught in the coils of his own endless labor. He can approach the daily task with the morning light in his eyes. In the midst of all the perplexities and difficulties and disappointments there is light in his heart. He carries with him a perpetual sense of the romance of the city of God. He hears the silver wedding bells even when others only hear melancholy fog horns sounding through the dark. And after the long burden of the work of the day of life itself he finds that at evening time there is light.

## IV

### THE HISTORICAL CONTINUITY

**T**HAT masterful and epochmaking philosopher Hegel lived through a turbulent period. The swift thrust of Napoleon's armies moved right across his life. His last years were spent in the city of Berlin where with the tides of a great metropolis moving about him he sought to find and to interpret the nature of that reality which lies back of all our life and is expressed in it. There is something which has its own appeal to the imagination in the thought of this brilliant thinker standing in the midst of the currents of the life of a mighty city and teaching his students to view the whole unfolding pageant of human life and history. The Christian worker in the modern city needs just the perspective which comes from seeing the age at the end of the ages. His mind and his use of it in

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the apprehending of the meaning of the past have a definite and far reaching relation to his devotional life.

George Matheson wrote some of the most notable devotional books of the nineteenth century. His life knew its own tragedy and its own victory. He was a man whose blindness released his sight. Dr. Matheson wrote in a style whose magic is the delight and envy of the reader who himself wields a less responsive pen. The thing which immediately impresses the student of his devotional writing is his easy and natural and constant appeal to the mind. He refused to believe that the devotional life is something different from the life of the mind and something foreign to it. He believed that the only permanent mastery of the heart must be a mastery of the mind as well, and he felt that you cannot keep control of the conscience unless the mind is also convinced. He filled devotional writing with a noble intellectuality. It was never self conscious. It was never colored by a subtle intellectual pride. But it constantly recognized that the mind

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has rights. And it was based upon the conviction that there is a devotion of the mind which is one of the most wonderful devotions in all the world.

The actual strategy of the devotional life is only understood when we recognize that the mind must join the heart in all the long and wonderful journeys of the inner life. It is when the whole personality is engrossed in the hour of devotion that the man comes forth with a fresh and resilient vigor ready for all the practical tasks of life.

We see at once when we approach the whole matter in this way that the hour of devotion becomes a time of intense thought and a time of the most unremittent labor of the mind. It is not an easy going meditation. It is the most demanding exercise of every faculty of perception and thought and feeling. And it is all of this with a growing awareness of the presence and power and guidance and inspiration of that unseen friend who is the Master of Life.

When we come to study the relation of the intellect to the devotional life we are

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soon confronted by that historical continuity which has been a part of the noblest life of man's mind. To be sure the armies of the mind move forward and backward. There are advances and there are retreats. There are dark defeats as well as glorious victories. But with all this the stream of the mental life ever widens as it moves onward toward the great sea. And the hour of devotion gives a man a great sense of the continuity of his own life with that of the struggling and achieving thinkers in the great days which lie behind us.

The man who does not pay the price of mental discipline and secure the large perspective which a knowledge of history gives is quite likely to have a sense of new and strange adventure on paths where there are really many footprints of the men who have gone that way before. And when in his time of deep devotion he has entered into spiritual fellowship with the master workers who have built the very sort of structure he is trying to effect it gives him a new glad sense of human fellowship, a new sense of



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that human solidarity which is so deep and noble a thing in the life of man.

We are all too likely to think of the careful and scientific habit of mind as a recent invention if we are merely busy with its contemporary expressions. But if we go back to all the systematic classifications of Aristotle and see the fashion in which this amazing pioneer plotted out the life of the mind and gathered materials from far fields and estimated facts with a certain just and impartial weighing of the evidence, we will begin to see what a splendid and what an ancient tradition is really represented by the scientific method. As we watch the scientists of the Hellenistic period in Alexandria we shall feel the thrill of their shrewd observation and their notable discoveries.

The young man who is captured by the moral and spiritual splendor of the vision of the world organized in one great unity of life is easily tempted to think of this international mind as a new and untried experience among men. If he really knows the past he will be called up sharply as he reads

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the *De Monarchia* of Dante with its hatred of war and its hope for a world built about the idea of international unity and international order.

In fact the more a man knows of the ways of the minds of the great thinkers of the world the more he comes to a humble consciousness of how much he has to learn from them. He is saved from the provinciality of being merely a citizen of an age. He becomes a citizen of the ages. And in that great citizenship he comes to a new understanding of life. When all this is brought with humble eagerness into the time of devotion and is played upon by the rich and mellow meanings of that experience the sense of historic continuity becomes one of the great and inspiring features of a man's life. He lives and works in a modern city. But by a creative sympathy he has become a citizen of all great towns of all the ages and of all parts of the world. They have poured their richness into his own mind. They have brought their treasures to his growing life.

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All this does not rob a man of originality. It does not take the adventurous initiative out of his life. It makes him wise enough to know that sometimes he is an echo when he thought he was a creator. But this experience is really not bad for him. It teaches him the meaning of the mistakes of the past as well as the power of its insights. And it gives him clear and critical knowledge of the field in which the play of his own mind is to be felt. By mastering the contribution of the past his mind is released for a kind of original work which would have been impossible to him before. The past is not a chain which binds him. It is the trunk of a great tree which supports him. It does not inhibit criticism. It does make criticism wise with the wisdom of experience.

Every leader in the kingdom of God needs to find his way through the great significant highways of the past and then to take this outline of history into his devotional life and see it all in the light of his relation to that Living God whose face he has seen in the

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face of Jesus Christ. So past and present are joined as parts of one world and of one experience which the future is to complete. So the worker approaches his task with all the propulsion of a real understanding of the unity of life.

## IV

### THE COURAGE OF THE MIND

**I**N the city of Athens Plato taught when that city was the center of an intellectual life whose brilliancy still fills us with wonder. All about were objects of the most exquisite beauty. The material spoke in a voice of gracious and appealing loveliness. But all the while the invisible realities of the mind were more wonderful to Plato than all the movement and stir and visible beauty of that marvelous city where he taught. The pressure of the city was never allowed to dominate that free moving mind which was the great gift of Plato to his country and his time, to the whole world and to every time. The Christian worker in the modern city needs to capture some of this sense of the rights of the mind. He needs to achieve a courage in his mental life quite like that which inspired the fourth century

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Greek thinker. And in doing this he will be serving the very interests of that life of devotion whose fires give the noblest meaning to his life.

The books of biography which boys love best to read tell us that there has been plenty of physical adventure in the world. The history of moral reforms wrought out at great cost of personal devotion makes it clear that there has been much moral adventure in the world. The books written by the great mystics telling the tale of their adventures climbing along the difficult peaks of the life of the spirit make it plain that there has been much spiritual adventure in the world. There has also been much intellectual adventure. The real thinker is always an intellectual adventurer. And one of the most definite requirements for the actual advancement of life is the courage of the mind. There is to be sure a difference between a courageous mind and a reckless mind. But the mental life is a perpetual adventure and the man at the helm of the ship must not be afraid of storms.

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'The fashion in which the life of the mind is made steady and strong at the very moment when it is full of fine daring and courage is best seen when we think of the thinker as he brings the results of his thinking to his hour of devotion made rich and inspiring by the thought that now he is offering the activities of his mind as a personal gift to the Master of his life. It is in this hour that his daring is sobered by a high sense of responsibility. It is in this hour that he sees the things of time in the light of eternity and in this large perspective reviews the meaning of all his thoughts. His intellectual life is not one thing and his devotional life another. The two are joined together in holy wedlock.

These matters are illustrated by the relation of the Christian worker to the study of the Bible, to the conclusions of modern science, and to those social and economic relationships which make up so much of our life.

The Bible is like a powerful swimmer. It

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does not need artificial protection. It is so vital and so powerful that it only needs an opportunity to exercise its own great strength and skill. There is a subtle scepticism which would withhold the documents of the Bible from that careful and scrutinizing investigation which is the inevitable lot of all other documents. The real man of faith is not afraid. He welcomes the test. He knows that there are no hidden secrets about the Old Testament and the New which must be kept from the public. He welcomes all reverent and candid investigation. He knows to be sure that if a man approaches the Bible with no sympathy for its moral and spiritual ideals or for the life which it reflects he will inevitably misinterpret it. But he knows also that this sort of misunderstanding is by no means confined to expert scholars who have more technical skill than spiritual discernment. He does insist that the only way to understand the Bible is to approach it along the line of that mighty moral and spiritual movement of which it is the record. The man who has



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not the mind of Jesus will never understand the records of Jesus.

Our Christian worker will view all Biblical problems in the light of that moral and spiritual life of which the Bible is the vehicle. He will ask whether the recorded wonder is in harmony with the character of God as it is revealed in the New Testament. All parts of the Bible as well as all parts of the world must be judged at last by the revelation in Jesus. And again and again this approach will throw new meaning on a Biblical book. If you argue about the historicity of the book of Jonah you will not even be thinking of its message. On the other hand if you remember that even as Jesus rebuked ungenerous bigotry by the story of the lost coin and the story of the lost sheep and the story of the lost son so an earlier teacher rebuked the narrow and ungenerous spirit of his age by the story of a sulking prophet who did not want to represent a loving God, who was angry when a city repented, who preferred to love a vine he could have for himself alone than to love a

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God he had to share with Nineveh, who was told that it was well for God to think of all the innocent children in a great city and even of its inarticulate cattle,—if in this fashion you approach the book you discover its moral and spiritual meaning and the question of its historicity is as idle as would be the endeavor to find the name of the prodigal son or the date of the birth of the woman who lost the coin of which Jesus spoke.

Courage and reverence together will find their way through the Bible and leave it even more obviously the literature in which God speaks to men than it was before the days of critical investigation.

The same principles apply in the matter of the relation of the Christian worker to the conclusions of modern science. Now of course there is science and science. If what a man calls science is an attempt to interpret a personal universe in impersonal terms, if the thinker talks of a mechanical process as if it could be self-running and self-explaining the artist and the poet as well as the Chris-

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tian must simply retort that there is more in the universe than is dreamed of in his philosophy. Watts Duncan put this sort of protest for the artist in powerful form in that striking book "Alwyn." But it is possible to accept every well fortified conclusion of modern scientific investigation and to see in all this new knowledge a fuller revelation of the way in which God has worked and the way in which he is working today. It is possible to think of the laws of nature as one brilliant thinker has put it as the habits of God. It is possible with all our analysis of the uniformity of nature to realize that as a clever man once said: "A law can never arrest anybody. It requires a policeman." In other words it is possible to see that personality is the last word even in the world whose physical uniformities are so striking. Indeed the study of any man for one day gives us all the data we need. When a man asks another to pass the dish on the opposite side of the table he illustrates that combination of dependable law and free moving personality which is

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found in the whole experience of life as man knows it. Any system which makes room for man as we know him must leave room for God as the Bible reveals Him. Courage and reverence together find their way through the world which the acute analysis of our time has made known to us.

It is also true that the terribly difficult problems of social and industrial relationships requires the courage of the mind. It is easy to believe so deeply in the stable order that we overlook injustice. It is easy to be so indignant at injustice that we risk the whole fabric of civilization. The man who is to be as conservative as ancient good and as radical as all the new insights which are really dependable will have need of a brave mind. And the poise of reverent courage will here prove to be just what a man constantly needs.

These things cannot be fought out wisely apart from the hour of devotion. And at its own peril will the life of devotion shut them out from its experiences. The courage of the mind must be a part of the devotional

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life, and the discipline of the mind is one of the most important results of the period of devotion. It is only when we do our thinking in the light of the consciousness of the presence of God that we think as wisely and as nobly as it is possible for us to think.

## VI

### 'THE CREATIVE BELIEFS

**T**HE city of Alexandria early captured something of the cosmopolitan spirit of the world conqueror who founded it. Here the East met the West. Here all sorts of ideas which had inherent qualities of antagonism learned to live together with something like toleration. Here the Hebrew religion learned to speak Greek in the work of Philo. And here Christianity learned to use Greek philosophy as its friend. There is something about a city which makes it easy for men to combine things rather than to set them over against each other. And this mental hospitality which has so much of good in it may easily go on to be a sort of intellectual friendliness which has lost its sense of fundamental distinctions. The Christian worker in the modern city needs to scrutinize very crit-

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ically its cosmopolitan spirit. He is to receive much from it. It also brings to him that which must be brought to the test of the closest and clearest thinking. This test must be met in the very name of that devotional life which is the surest source of inspiration for all thinking and for all activity.

“My only creed is to have no creed” said a clever talker who was always master of an easy and effective phrase. The little epigram was really more revealing than its author knew. For the human mind is so constituted that a man must have some sort of a creed even if it is more or less inarticulate, even if it is a sort of formulated lawlessness.

The real objections to creeds are worth careful consideration however. A creed may simply be wrong. It may run counter to facts. It may run counter to the deepest human experience. It may be the formulation of men's prejudices and not the expression of their insights. And even when it is correct and true men are all the while tempted to take the sign as a substitute for

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the thing signified. Nobody objects to the formula  $H_2O$ , but it would be a very foolish man who would attempt to masticate the formula instead of drinking a glass of water. And it is just as unwise to make the formula a substitute for the reality when you are dealing with the water of life. Then it is so easy for men to fall to fighting about their formulas that they are apt to forget that spirit of unselfish love and patient sympathy which must exist back of and through all formulas if they are to have any helpful and abiding meaning. All this has led many earnest people to come to a feeling of dislike for all creedal expressions. They are so afraid of becoming fossils that they are inclined to do without any vertebrae.

When we stop to think with any clarity and depth it at once becomes evident however that a great life must be based upon great beliefs. And the quest for a kindling and inspiring cluster of convictions is one of the great quests of life.

The Christian worker goes to his hours of devotion to live in the very fellowship of



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the highest thoughts about man and God and brotherhood and destiny. He has early learned that one of the wonderful ways in which a man can keep his creed vital and human and noble is by keeping it suffused with the spirit of prayer.

The creative beliefs are those which arise out of deep and searching human experience and vindicate themselves in the very vicissitudes of life. They have enough hardness to be strong and stable. But they are like the coral reef upon which at last the palms wave and whose island echoes with the cries of happy children at play in the tropical sunshine. A belief is not something enforced upon a man from without. It is something which rises from within the hour of his sternest struggle and his highest commitment and his most noble insight.

The Christian worker finds a fundamental source of inspiration in his deepest hour of devotion and in his most eager hour of action from one great conviction about the source of all life. He is sure that when you ask the ultimate question you must

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always enquire "Who?" and not "What?" In other words he finds a conscious mind and a conscious heart and a conscious will at the center of the universe. This is the very basis of all his hope and of all his eager and devoted action. It puts the last quality of energy into prayer. For in the light of this conviction prayer is not loftily soliloquy. It is high companionship. And you cannot have companionship unless there is a great Companion. The harder the pressure the more difficult the problems the more discouraging the environment the more it is necessary for the Christian worker to find refuge and inspiration in that greater environment which becomes effective in a man's life when he becomes conscious of the presence of God.

The modern man lives in a world where many brilliant people are all the while exercising wonderful ingenuity in confusing all the issues. They are sure that white is not so very white and that black is not so very black. In fact they reduce most experience to a rather dull grey. Now the masterful

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and productive personalities of the world have never been able to rest in this blurring of all moral and spiritual distinctions. They have been conscious of very sharp lines of cleavage. They have been conscious of very sternly demanding loyalties. And this belief that the distinction between right and wrong is a fundamental and eternal thing is the very basis of all effective living above the level of flashing impulses and the contention of mutually antagonistic passions.

Then the belief that God can become articulate in human life, the belief that God has become articulate in human life, the belief that we see the face of God in the face of Jesus Christ is a perpetual fountain of inspiration. Many of the masterful thinkers of the world have felt that the great God is utterly shut off from human experience. And as a result they have lived in an impoverished and depleted world. If God is shut off from human life then man is shut off from God. And as we face the actualities of life more and more it becomes necessary to have an articulate God who speaks our

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language and can use our minds and bodies if we are to have any permanent source of inspiration. An absent God means at last a hopeless world.

Then very simply and very reverently but with all assurance we must say that if there is any permanent hope for the world men must worship a God who has been hurt. In this world of brutal and terrible pain a Deity who has never suffered becomes a God who cannot command our hearts. An infinite spectator does not meet the need of men and women in this terrible world. Only a God who had felt the passion and the pain. Only a God whose own heart has been broken can speak the word which captures man's last allegiance and his complete commitment. Only a God who speaks from the cross can make it possible for men to believe in a crown of hope and success either here or hereafter.

Of course all this is only a hint of the fashion in which the Christian is to take his deepest beliefs about God and life into his hour of prayer and there to meditate upon

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them to brood over them to allow them to become the possessing realities which shine before his mind, release his imagination, energize his will and send him forth eager to live in the light of all their meaning. These great beliefs and all the other matters which grow out of the deepest Christian experience will reveal just that creative quality which quickens the whole personality and releases its fullest power.

From the time of devotion when the great realities of his faith have glowed like rising suns before him a man will go forth to all the grime and evil of the turbulent modern town with a new light in his eye and a new potency in all his activity. When Christian truth ceases to be just a matter of clear ideas and becomes a matter of living experience everything is changed. In a sense a theology is always a dangerous thing until it is translated into burning reality in the hour of devotion and into just and brotherly activity in all the hours of life.

## VII

### THE CONSCIENCE OF GOD

**D**ANTE ALIGHIERI spent a long and weary period of his life an exile from his native city of Florence. But he was never really far away from this city of his heart. He was always thinking of Florence. He was always writing with Florence in the background of his mind. He was always seeing Florence in the light of the eternal realities and the deathless sanctions of the divine conscience. He saw his own city against the background of the moral life of God. The Christian worker in the modern city needs to have just such an experience. He needs it for the sake of the city. He needs it for the sake of his own life.

There are two experiences which interfere with the depth and definiteness of the moral and spiritual life of the Christian worker.

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One comes from the fashion in which the high enthusiasms wane and lose their inspiration. The great lights which shone so resplendently in the first eager days of devotion begin to burn dimly and at last are sometimes almost lost in the fog which gathers about the passing years. The other experience comes from an apprehension of how many different standards good men have held in different ages and how many different standards thoroughly disciplined minds defend today. As a knowledge of these things grows distinctions sometimes begin to lose their sharpness and the day may come when it is difficult to feel the old absolute compulsion of absolute standards. These experiences may at last take from the Christian worker just that glow of triumphant faith and that enthusiasm of definite assurance without which his work cannot have its last and highest power.

At this point there is one correcting and stabilizing and creative experience which is the secret of perpetual inspiration and the source of perpetual power. The final

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strategy of the Christian life is found in the fellowship of the Christian with the conscience of God. There are times when we are not alert enough to think the thoughts of God after Him. There are times when we are too dull to respond to the tidal movement of the heart of the master of life. But the sense of the conscience of God at once revives the mind and ere long rehabilitates the heart. The inner lethargy which depletes so many lives is impossible in the presence of an awareness of the quality of the movement of that infinite conscience in which all moral distinctions live eternally. Then here we have at last a sense of coming into contact with something absolute and changeless. Whatever men say about right and wrong there is an absolute standard in the life of God himself and as we seek that we are delivered from the palsyng sense of relativity which takes the power from so many of our judgments. Limited and finite as is our response to that divine moral life which is the conscience of God we have at once the sense that we are in



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contact in some real if partial way with the eternal and the unchangeable.

Day by day we come to the hour of devotion to see our own lives not from the standpoint of our own likes or dislikes or even from the point of view dominated by the community standards. We come to see our lives through the eyes of Jesus who looked at all life through the eyes of God. There is something very searching about this experience. It is a perpetual rebuke of that superficial complacency which has made many a life less than it might have become. The man who attempts to apply to his own life daily the conscience of God is committed to a new honesty and is sure to attain a new humility. He does not judge himself by other men. He judges his life by the eternal standard as that is seen in the Human Life Divine. And on the basis of the relentless honesty of this experience all sorts of wonderful and beautiful things come within the range of his appreciation and appropriation which were impossible before. The only moral safety of the individual is through

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perpetually renewed contact with the conscience of God.

Then he comes to see the groups of which he is most intimately a part through the same sort of searching experience. It is only safe to see other lives in this fashion after one has felt the full demand of the experience upon one's own. Otherwise a man may be led into that moral bog where he ignores the evil in his own life and keeps himself occupied in repenting of the sins of others. Vicarious repentance has an important place in human life. But it is never to be a substitute for individual repentance. It is a great thing to be convicted of the sins of society. But it becomes an experience full of subtle moral danger if that conviction is a substitute for the full and honest facing of the whole meaning of one's personal life. It is easy for a man with an inorganic personality to escape from a consideration of his own need while he is occupied with the tragedy of the inorganic quality of the social organism. But after a man has met and as he meets his own per-

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sonal problem he must also face the problems of the larger social groups. He must see his home in the light of the conscience of God. He must see his community in the light of the conscience of God. He must see his church in the light of the conscience of God. Here he will find all the summons of a great ideal to be realized and a great failure out of which men must pass on the highway toward success. Plato believed that the ideal in its perfect form was more real than the actual as that was shown in this world. There is a perfect standard of all relationships which is perpetually alive in the conscience of God. And by that standard our thought and our action are to be perpetually renewed.

The Christian worker will move through his city in fellowship with the conscience of God.

“ He came to the desert of London town  
Mirk miles broad.  
He wandered up and he wandered down  
Ever alone with God.”

A city has endless ways of confusing us.

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The lights fall in such various and bewildering fashions. There are so many angles from which to view all the manifold complexity of the life of the great town. It is easy to become dizzy. It is easy to lose that moral perspective which is essential to leadership. But when a man moves through his city with the conscience of the Master of Life alive in him the lines become more and more simple and clear and plain. He sees the city through the eyes of Christ. And now it is not possible for him to lose his way. He comes with fresh and unspoiled eyes to all the adroit sophistications of a modern town. And like one of the great prophets he becomes the conscience of the city which he loves so much that he dare not take lightly its dark and evil ways.

The Christian worker comes at length to our whole social and economic structure with his eyes sharpened through his renewing moral experience. He sees all the articulations of society with the conscience which Jesus has given to him and which he dares to believe is the conscience of the

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great God of all. All matters of property, all matters of production and distribution, all matters of buying and selling must at last meet this test. Men who have appropriated the conscience of the Master of Life are to renew the social order.

There is another step. The Christian worker lifts his eyes and sees the whole world with the conscience of its Lord. Now it is that race prejudice dies in his life. Now it is that the vision of a friendly and brotherly world possesses him. The international mind is the creation of God's conscience coming to dwell in the life of men.

All of this is given its supreme power of moral and spiritual seizure as the Christian worker looks upon the cross where Jesus died. In that great deed of suffering love the moral life of God found perfect expression. Years and years will be required to fathom even a few of its implications. But standing in its presence a man faces the realities which are to be related to his own life, to the life of his home, to the life of the city, to the social structure, and to the

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world. The cross is the conscience of God in action. And the Christian worker is to carry every moral and spiritual reality which Calvary expresses out into all the relations of life.

## VIII

### THE ORGANIC LIFE

**T**OWARD the end of the fifteenth century Savonarola was for one golden moment the master of Florence. A great new passion swept the populace. It seemed as if indeed the Holy City had come to be one with the great Italian town. All activities and all institutions began to be built about one deep and noble purpose of loyalty to God. It seemed that the city had become a great organism built about a living passion for doing the will of God. It was only a moment but it was a moment which will hold its place in the annals of the human spirit as that spirit has expressed itself in the great towns of the world. The Christian worker in the modern city has many haunting memories of experiments in other cities and in other lands in these matters of making the ideal the real. He does

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not forget Savonarola as he goes about his work and he does not forget the golden moment of his success. He deliberately finds time to remember such things. He deliberately finds time to analyze his own city, his own land, his own church, and his own world. He is not afraid to take time to think.

“The man who idly sits and thinks  
May sow a nobler crop than corn.  
For thoughts are seeds of future deeds,  
And when God thought a world was born.”

So sang a poet whose mind was full of all the wonderful contribution which good and sound thinking has made to the life of the world. To be sure he only expressed a part of the truth. There is a good deal of idle sitting and thinking which does not lead to any particularly valuable crop. And on the whole it is very necessary to have the corn as well as the ideas and the ideals.

It is also true however that the hour of deep and brooding meditation and the hour of earnest prayer in respect of the actualities



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of experience may prove most fruitful. The dreamer who turns his dreaming into willing and his willing into action has the future of the world in his hand. The practical mystic is the man of power.

When an eager and honest young man with the modern accent in all his thinking and feeling and acting sits alone with the thought of one of our great present day cities playing through his mind it is a memorable experience. The sensitive surface of his life responds with instant capacity to receive deep impressions as all the color and all the energy and all the audacious speed and the hot intensity of a modern town pass into the portal of his spirit. Here is one of the nerve centers of civilization. It is all athrob with life. It is the very quintessence of that spirit of notable achievement, of vivid experience and of existence at the highest pressure which makes up our modern world.

But the more this sensitive and impressionable mind broods upon the great and populous modern town the more it becomes

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evident that with all its wonder and beauty and charm it is the scene of a bitter tragedy. It is not a place of harmony. All the aspects of its life do not fit together to make a complete and articulate life. It is the dwelling place of clenched antagonisms. It is the home of bitter cruelty and hard and sordid selfishness. It is the seat of that dark disintegration which destroys the body and deadens the conscience and dulls the mind and breaks the spirit. There is much good in it. There is much beauty in it. But taken altogether the city is a unity made up of compromising discords. It has one great defect. It is inorganic.

As he thinks of these things the man of brooding meditation sees a happy vision of the city as it might become. He sees the golden beauty of a brotherhood which might enrich the life of all the dwellers in the town. He pictures a city whose buildings, whose customs and whose citizens all express the organic qualities of harmony and sympathy. He longs to help in the work of producing such a town.

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Then the mind of our thinker takes loftier flight. He looks at the life of all the world. He sees in rapid review all the nations. He sees the ships upon the seas, the trains swiftly passing upon the lands. He looks upon the agriculture, the manufacturing, and the commerce of the world. At first it all seems like the perfect achievement of some great organizing genius. But he looks at it more closely. He sees all the terrible ravages of war. He sees industrial and economic disturbances. He sees the sullen passions of national hatred and of racial hostility. He sees concrete pictures of man's brutality to man in all the continents of the world. And so he comes at last to an inevitable appraisal. The world as a whole like the city is the victim of a great tragedy. It is not the achievement of a great harmony. It is the wide lying action of a great discord. The world is inorganic. It has never learned how to function. It has never achieved unity of mind or heart or conscience or spirit. The apple of discord has fallen in every city and in every land. It

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has been tasted in every island. The nations have never learned how to live together. In the folly of their struggle they seem a vast worldwide conspiracy for the destruction of the race.

Then the thinker turns from the world and the city to the church. Here at least the lights of a noble idealism shine. Here at least the brightness not found on sea or land dwells in the heart of a divine institution. In the midst of the darkness this light shines clearly. At least with some such expectation he comes to his survey of the church. And he does find much that is beautiful and much that is good and much that is worthy in the church of the living God. But as he looks closely he makes a tragic discovery. Here too is folly. Here too is failure. Here too the forces of disintegration are at work. Once and again groups of the world wide church have fought so wrathfully over symbols that they have forgotten realities. Once and again they have refused to meet the challenge of the Master and to allow the full light of his

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truth and his demand to fall upon the individual the social and the economic life. The church was meant to be the conscience of mankind. Once and again it is seen that the church itself needs a conscience stern and candid. The closer the examination the more clear and necessary is the verdict. The church is inorganic. It has not achieved that unity of spirit which expresses the mind of Christ. It is full of moral and spiritual discord. It needs healing when it should be bringing healing to the world.

Then if our thinker is quite honest he takes one more step. Having seen the vision of the inorganic city and the inorganic world and the inorganic church he turns to search into the quality of his own life. He turns all the light of fearless investigation to bear upon his own personality. He examines his own soul. And here he finds much that is beautiful. He finds a wealth of aspiration. He finds a great outreach after goodness and after God. But as his insistent honesty presses him to continue his inspection he is forced at last to

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admit that here too the forces of disintegration are at work. His nature is not nobly organized about one great purpose. He has not found the secret of inner harmony. Clamorous impulses madly contend upon the arena of his inner life. Wild passions fling themselves hot and insistent into his consciousness. Subtle and sordid selfishnesses have their way with him. Sometimes his deed which seems fair and good has a tiny hissing serpent at the root of it. He too is inorganic. He the man who would like to remake the city needs to be remade himself. He the man who would like to reconstruct the world needs himself to be reconstructed. He who would like to regenerate the church must himself find regeneration. And his passion to help the city and the world and the church drives him with remorseless honesty to face the inorganic quality of his own life. His social passion leads him to that desperate candid self analysis which makes it clear that if he is to be a socially productive man his own life must be made organic.

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Here he reaches the crisis in one of the supreme hours of his own soul in its dealing with God, with moral reality, and with life. For when a man has discovered that he is inorganic he is ready for that deep and permanent ministry of the spirit of God in his own soul which will renew all the forces of his life. He is ready for that mighty action of the Living Christ which will organize every energy of his personality about a new purpose and a new devotion. He is ready to be made organic by the grace of God.

The method by which this comes about is of the deepest interest. The man who has discovered that his own life is inorganic looks at the life of Jesus. And at once he is startled and amazed by the contrast. Here is a life which is in complete harmony with itself. Here is a life which is entirely organic. There was no untamed chaos in the life of Jesus. There was no mutinous desire successfully lifting the flag of revolt against his central purpose. He was in complete command of his body, his mind, his conscience, his heart. His whole life func-

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tioned in perfect unity. It came with struggle. It came with battle. But the struggle was victorious conflict. And the battle closed with the triumph of perfect goodness expressed in perfectly human ways. As the life of Jesus is studied more completely it is seen that he achieved this organic quality because he was in perpetual fellowship with God. In that fellowship all contradictions were resolved into harmony and all that was partial became complete. Now the man in the midst of personal struggle comes to the place where he opens his life to the work of Christ. He finds a new center of devotion. He finds a new heart of purpose. Through his relation to Christ he enters into moral and spiritual fellowship with the God whose life is completely organic. The forces of disintegration have lost command of his life. He has found the sources of moral and spiritual renewal.

Every spirit enters its own holy of holies if it comes to such an hour as this. And out of it new human eyes look upon the world and a new human heart takes up the tasks



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of life. When a man has been made organic he can work with passion undying and with power mysterious in its constancy for the making of an organic city and an organic world through the activity of an increasingly organic brotherhood which is the living church.

## IX

### LIVING IN THE CITY OF MAN FOR THE CITY OF GOD

**T**HERE is much to be said about the great days of Calvin in the city of Geneva. There is much that is good. There is something that is not so good. But when we have gone over the whole story and have considered the failures as well as the successes the mistakes as well as the achievements it remains to be said that it was a very gallant attempt to make the city of God a reality in the city of men. And from Geneva out all over Europe there moved great tides of regenerating life.

The Christian worker has a great life of devotion. We have been considering its various aspects in all of these studies. He has also the responsibility for living a life of fruitful activity. He must bring all which

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he has received in the hour of the inner communion to the hours of energetic service. His life is to be like a book whose leaves are for the healing of the city. Inspiration is to be translated into action. The city of God is to be in a new sense a reality in the city of man because the Christian worker moves in and out of its manifold doors and walks in its busy streets.

The city ceases to be a mere vast mass of people to the man who dwells within its boundaries. It becomes a matter of close human contact with a few very definite men and women and little children. The evangel of the human touch is an influence of unsurpassed power. All about the town the man who goes forth from the inner communion lights bright little candles in particular human lives. He meets a young man whose ideals are waning. He leaves him with the warmth of a new enthusiasm and the glowing energy of a new commitment. He stands in the midst of little children who have already learned too much of what Edwin Markham once called "the fearful wis-

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dom of the street." With a bright and contagious energy he meets these children in the terms of their own life and experience. Very simply and very vividly he brings to their minds a whole series of pictures clean and beautiful and true. He guides them in their play and makes play a school of character. He gives the very best he has to give knowing that there is nothing so potential as childhood. And so new human centers of goodness and faithfulness are created all about him. He meets men and women from many a land across the sea. They are lonely and confused and disheartened in this new world. He takes such a direct and actual interest in them that their eyes begin to shine with a new gladness. He talks to them of the lands from which they come and they are surprised to find that he knows and cares about things which they supposed were never thought of in this strange and preoccupied land. He gives them a subtle sense that they are of value, and they have something to give as well as something to receive in America. And so he is all the

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while helping to create good citizens as well as good men. He meets those whose lives are fairly covered with the slime of the dark and evil places of the town. Their hard and hopeless faces seize upon his heart. One by one he learns to know them. He believes in them when they do not dare to believe in themselves. He has high expectations for them when they see only darkness ahead. And by and by they begin to hope. By and by they are ready for the knowledge of that Master of hope who sends all Christian workers into all the dark places of our great towns. And as the years go by there is a great and golden harvest of good secured from those areas where one finds the last and the lowest and the least. There is always a romance in the pursuit of the individual spirit which is to be won for Christ. The worker becomes a mighty hunter before the Lord.

The city is not only a place of people. It is also the home of manifold institutions. And very soon the Christian worker discovers that these institutions will have much

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to do with those purposes which are the deepest matter in his life. Some of the institutions are good. Some of them are evil. And some are a mixture of possibilities of good and possibilities which are not good at all. The public school is rendering a service in the midst of our great towns which is almost beyond praise. It is more than a place of training. It is the open door to a veritable new world to multitudes of children in the most evil and sordid surroundings. It must be utilized to the limit of its power of service. The public appreciation of its possibilities as well as the understanding of its achievements must be developed until the men and women of the town really know the meaning of their schools. So the Christian worker is the advocate and the supporter of this great institution. He knows how important it is that men and women of character do its work and he is a perpetual influence in the direction of securing the best men and women for the teaching profession. He finds himself a part of a highly organized municipal life. Too

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often there is much that is evil in its structure and its methods. The friend of the town finds himself a fighter in the town. The battle with municipal corruption is an ever returning fight. It is won for a day. Then it must be fought and won again. And the man who sees the invisible battlements of the Lord as he goes about his work in a modern city cannot refuse to have his share in this never ending fight. He is always on guard. He is always ready for the fray. Then there is vast industrial and economic organization. It is the glory of the city even as it is its peril. There is marvelous good in it. There is tragic evil in it. And with poise and steadiness the Christian worker must apply to this present order the principles of the kingdom of God. He is most careful in the collection of facts. He is most scientific in the movement toward generalizations. He believes in class coöperation and not class war. And he sees to it that the community comes into possession of all the facts which are necessary to an honest judgment in dealing with our funda-

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mental industrial problems. There are many matters which he can reach as can no other investigator. Then there are institutions for the corruption of society, institutions which organize vice and pander to every evil appetite. And these find a foe of restless vigilance in the Christian worker who knows that they must be cast out of our life if our towns are ever to do the clean and pure will of God. He has witnessed the lives they have broken and he hates them with a perfect hatred. There is that vast institution of the church. It involves differences of creed and method. But under the stress of the desperate demands of the struggle against evil and for good the friend of the city is willing to coöperate with every man who with whatever religious background wants to make the city a place where God reigns. He knows that Jew and Roman Catholic and Protestant have in common the ten commandments, the belief in a righteous God, and the belief in the triumph of righteousness and brotherhood in the world. He feels that there are many battles in which



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they can win if they will only fight together for the good of the town.

There is the spirit of the city. You cannot see it. But you can feel it. And its subtle mastery is a matter of vast strategy. The friend of the town is all the while trying to win it to a nobler character. In a thousand manifold ways he is working to create that impalpable thing a community spirit which shall be saturated with the very quality of the spirit of Jesus Christ. In the books he recommends to young people, in the activities he promotes, in the battles he fights, he is all the while laboring for that consummation which is reached as the spirit of the city becomes a spirit of reverence, a spirit of integrity, a spirit of goodness, a spirit created by the mastery of those principles which are fundamental in the kingdom of God. And high above all else in this realm of the ideals for which he contends is his vision of the living Christ crowned at last Lord of the town even as he is now Lord of the life of the man who goes with such an eager light in his eyes about its multitudinous streets.

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It is only from a life of communion with the God whose face we see in the face of Christ that it is possible to go forth to work triumphantly at such tasks in our modern cities. It is only as the inner communion is translated into the life of action that the city feels the impact of new and transforming energies with exhaustless power. The city must be remade if the world is to be saved. And the strategy of the devotional life as we view it from the heart of a modern town lies just in the fact that it holds the secret by which the men and women who are to give new life to the city can be secure in the possession of that life themselves. The man who is alive is irresistible. The city can resist anything but life. The life of the spirit can renew the body of every modern metropolis.

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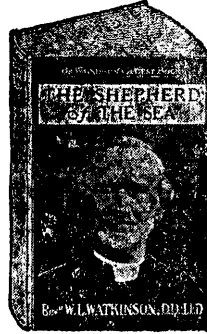
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